



1400 South 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Bozeman MT 59718-5496

April 23, 2019

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The enclosed decision notice is for the proposed herbicidal control of the aquatic invasive Eurasian watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*) within the Canyon Ferry Wildlife Management Area (CFWMA). The initial control action will likely occur in June 2019. The objective of the proposed action is to reduce the amount of Eurasian watermilfoil (EWM) in the CFWMA's east and west canals to reduce the likelihood of it spreading to those CFWMA's duck ponds whose primary source of water is the canals. EWM is an aquatic noxious weed (priority 2B) under state law, and as such FWP is required to control it under state law. EWM may also limit the growth of desired native aquatic plants in the canals. It is unlikely that control efforts would totally eradicate EWM from Canyon Ferry WMA as upstream populations would continue to provide plant propagules, but reductions in overall abundance will reduce the potential for EWM to spread and will benefit native aquatic plant populations.

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks is required by the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) to assess significant potential impacts of a proposed action to the human and physical environment. In compliance with MEPA, an Environmental Assessment (EA) was completed for the proposed project by FWP and released for public comment on March 19, 2019.

Public comments on the proposed project were taken for 30 days (through April 18, 2019). An EA notice was mailed to various individuals and groups; legal notices were printed in the Bozeman Chronicle and Helena Independent Record. The Environmental Assessment was also posted on the FWP webpage: <http://fwp.mt.gov/publicNotices/environmentalAssessments/developmentImprovementsAndEnhancements/>. No comments were received on the Environmental Assessment.

Based on the Environmental Assessment, the lack of public comments received, and the benefits and risks associated with this project, it is my decision to go forward with the proposed action (Alternative 2) of doing aquatic herbicidal control for the control of EWM. I find there to be no significant impacts on the human and physical environments associated with this project. Therefore, I conclude that the Environmental Assessment is the appropriate level of analysis, and that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

Questions regarding this Decision Notice should be mailed to:

Adam Grove  
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
P.O. Box 998  
Townsend, MT 59644  
Or e-mailed to: [adgrove@mt.gov](mailto:adgrove@mt.gov)

Sincerely,

Mark Deleray  
Region Three Supervisor

Attachment





**Control of the Aquatic Invasive Eurasian Watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*) within the Canyon Ferry Wildlife Management Area, Broadwater County**

**Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
Region 3, Bozeman  
April 2019**

**Preface**

The enclosed Decision Notice has been prepared for the control of the aquatic invasive Eurasian watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*) within the Canyon Ferry Wildlife Management Area. Canyon Ferry WMA is administered by the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) but is managed by Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) through a long-term management agreement with the Bureau of Reclamation. The purpose of the proposed action is to help control Eurasian watermilfoil (EWM) within the east and west canals on the CFWMA. If EWM spreads and becomes a problem elsewhere on the CFWMA (duck ponds for example), then there might be a need to control EWM elsewhere on the CFWMA in the future. The east canal supplies water to Ponds 2 and 3, while the west canal supplies water to Pond 4. The initial control action would likely occur in June 2019.

The objective of the proposed action is to reduce the amount of EWM in the two canals. EWM is an aquatic noxious weed (priority 2B) under state law, and as such FWP is required to control it under state law. EWM may also limit the growth of desired native aquatic plants in the canals. It is unlikely that control efforts would totally eradicate EWM from Canyon Ferry WMA as upstream populations would continue to provide plant propagules, but reductions in overall abundance will reduce the potential for EWM to spread and will benefit native aquatic plant populations.

**Public Process and Comments**

FWP is required by the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) to assess potential impacts of a proposed action to the human and physical environment. An Environmental Assessment (EA) in compliance with MEPA was completed for the proposed project by FWP and released for public comment on March 19, 2019.

The following two alternatives were considered in this Environmental Assessment:

**Alternative 1: No Action.** Under the No Action Alternative, there would be no control of EWM within the two canals or in other possible areas of the CFWMA.



Alternative 2: Preferred alternative to utilize aquatic herbicidal control. Under this alternative, FWP would conduct aquatic herbicidal applications (via a licensed contractor) in the two canals on the Canyon Ferry WMA (or potentially the duck ponds in the future) on an annual basis to control EWM.

Public comments were taken on the EA for 30 days (through April 18, 2019). Copies of the EA were mailed to various individuals and groups and legal notices were printed in the Bozeman Chronicle and Helena Independent Record. The Environmental Assessment was also posted on the FWP webpage:

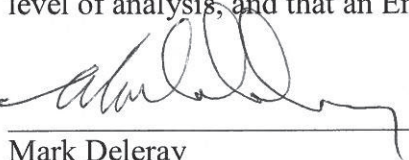
<http://fwp.mt.gov/news/publicNotices/environmentalAssessments/developmentImprovementsAndEnhancements/>

No public comments were received on the proposed project.

### Decision

It is my decision, based on the Environmental Assessment and the lack of public comment, to approve the proposed action of doing aquatic herbicidal control of the aquatic invasive Eurasian watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*) within the Canyon Ferry Wildlife Management Area (CFWMA) starting likely in June 2019. If successful, the proposed action will work to help control Eurasian watermilfoil (EWM) within the east and west canals on the CFWMA. It is unlikely that control efforts will totally eradicate EWM from Canyon Ferry WMA as upstream populations would continue to provide plant propagules, but reductions in overall abundance will help reduce the potential for EWM to spread to the CFWMA's duck ponds and will benefit native aquatic plant populations found in the canals.

The analysis did not reveal any significant impacts to the human or physical environment as a result of the project. I therefore conclude that the Environmental Assessment is the appropriate level of analysis, and that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.



Mark Deleray  
Region 3 Supervisor

4/23/19

Date